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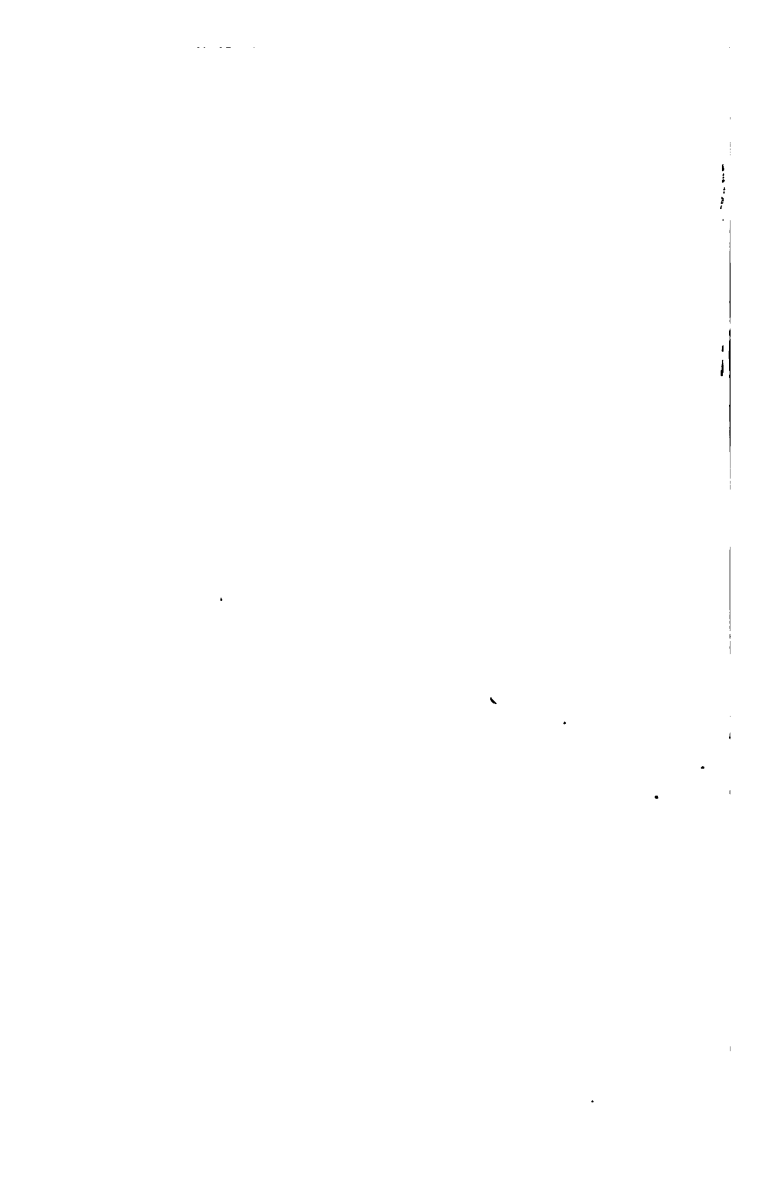
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THE FEAR OF THE LORD

THE

Guardian of Youth.



THE
FEAR OF THE LORD

THE
Guardian of Youth:

INCLUDING A
SERIES OF COUNSELS AND WARNINGS

TO
TWELVE DISTINCT CLASSES OF THE YOUNG

BY JOHN MORISON, D.D.

AUTHOR OF
"COUNSELS TO YOUNG MEN ON MODERN INFIDELITY, AND THE
EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY," ETC. ETC. ETC.



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WILLIAM TYLER,
PRINTER,
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TO
JOSEPH FINCHER, Esq.,
AUTHOR OF "THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF PRAYER,"
&c. &c. &c.,
WHO HAS BEEN A GREAT COMFORT TO HIM
IN HIS MINISTRY,
AND A WARM AND STEADY FRIEND
IN PRIVATE LIFE,
This little Volume,
WRITTEN FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE
RISING GENERATION,
IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED BY
THE AUTHOR.

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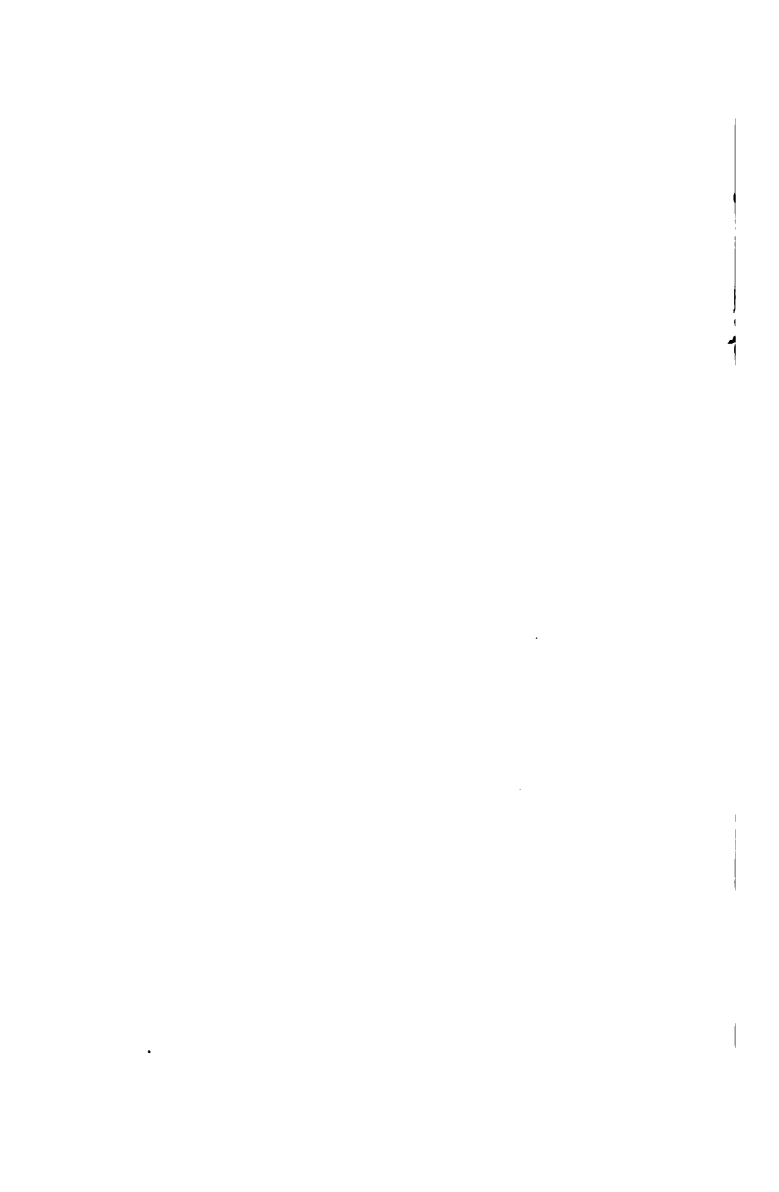
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PREFACE.

THE substance of the following pages, addressed to twelve distinct classes of the young, was originally delivered by the Author to the juvenile branches of his own flock. The desire expressed by many to see the Discourses referred to in a more permanent form, has induced him to revise his manuscripts, and to throw them into their present shape. He is not without hope, that a blessing may attend this humble effort to reach the mind and heart of that interesting portion of the human family more immediately contemplated.

The only sure preservative of the rising generation is, "the fear of the Lord." Without this, the best rules of conduct will

fail in carrying conviction to their hearts, and in shielding them from the contagion of surrounding evil. To explain the nature of that fear, to exhibit its evidence, to unfold its advantages, and to urge its cultivation, upon several of the more interesting classes into which the young are divided, are the objects to which this little volume is devoted. May the Omnipotent Spirit crown with success this feeble endeavour to promote the best interests of the rising race !

THE FEAR OF THE LORD

THE

GUARDIAN OF YOUTH.

INTRODUCTION.

It is recorded of Obadiah that he "feared the Lord greatly from his youth,"* though he lived in the house of a wicked prince. It is a truly imposing and beautiful spectacle to witness the triumph of religious principle amidst scenes of impiety and crime. Who could have expected to find in the governor of Ahab's house, a prophet of the Lord, a protector of God's persecuted

* 1 Kings xviii. 3, 12.

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THE FEAR OF THE LORD

THE

Guardian of Youth.

holy awe of the Divine Majesty, and an habitual care not to offend against that Infinite Being in whom are all the springs of our existence and happiness. It includes in it a distinct and realising belief in the existence of the Triune God ; a deep and solemn conviction of his self-existence, eternity, omniscience, and almighty power ; a profound reverence of his holiness, justice, goodness, mercy, and truth ; and an adoring confidence in his revealed character, as the Creator, Lawgiver, Preserver, Benefactor, and Redeemer of our guilty race. It is often employed by the inspired writers to express the whole of religion ; for this obvious reason, that where the fear of the Lord is implanted in any heart, it will give birth to all those affections of mind, and habits of conduct, which constitute the image of God in the character of man. It is essentially the offspring of Divine grace in the soul of an apostate being. The true fear of God is not the attribute of our fallen

nature. We may tremble before him as our Lawgiver and Judge ; but we do not reverence, adore, and serve him, as our Almighty Parent, and all-sufficient good. The fear of God must be put into that heart in which it rules and predominates. Hence the necessity of “ a new heart, and a right spirit.” Hence the description of all unrenewed minds—“ There is no fear of God before their eyes.”*

It is of great importance to remember, that that fear of God which constitutes true piety in the soul of an immortal and accountable being, is not the result of the contemplation of his attributes, as they are seen, in all the forms of wisdom, power, and goodness, in the heavens above, and in the earth beneath. Multitudes thus profoundly contemplate God, who yet afford lamentable proof that they have no true fear of Him in their hearts,—who live in the habitual neglect of his worship, and in the most daring

* Rom. iii. 18.

contempt of his laws. In every instance, the true fear of God, when it amounts to a religious principle, and when it issues in a religious character, is the result of a distinct perception of our *relation* to God, as our Lawgiver and moral Governor.

It is this perception alone which tells on the faculty of conscience. When we try ourselves by the test of God's holy law, and call to remembrance that that law is the transcript of his own moral image; that it "is holy, just, and good;" that it is adapted to our nature and condition; that we are bound by its precepts to love the Lord our God, "with all our heart, and strength, and mind, and our neighbour as ourselves;" we are then, for the first time, in the position of entering on the fear of the Lord.

Till we see ourselves in relation to God, as a Lawgiver and moral Governor, we never think aright of God's purity, or of our own sinfulness; we never appreciate duly the extent of our apostasy; we never dis-

cover the depth or malignity of sin; we never truly adore God as invested with the moral attributes of holiness, justice, and truth. But let a human being once look into the faithful mirror of God's holy and spiritual law; let him be fully convinced that that law is binding on his thoughts, words, and actions; that he can no more rid himself of its obligations, than he can of his immortal and accountable nature; that it will judge him in the great day of account; that it even now sits in judgment upon him, and pronounces its dread curse upon every instance of disobedience; and oh how will this view of his true position fill the sinner's heart with forebodings of the wrath of God!

The fear of God, thus created, is, of necessity, in the first instance, to a certain extent, *servile*;—it is the fear of an offended Majesty, it is the fear of wrath and “of judgment to come,” it is the fear of dropping into the lake that burneth with fire and

brimstone, it is the fear of a weak and trembling mortal standing before the outraged tribunal of an angry and avenging God. But, though, in the first instance, this fear is of necessity servile, it is intended to conduct to another and happier state of mind. God will have the sinner know his true position, by nature, that he may see himself an entire debtor to that grace of Heaven which brings him deliverance and escape. He saves none who think they can save themselves.

Hence the first work of the Spirit of God on the minds of men is to convince them of sin ; to show them that they are in immediate peril of the wrath of God ; that they have violated the law of their creation ; that they are condemned and under sentence of death. This work of the Spirit of God necessarily awakens terror of conscience ; it disturbs the false hopes of the sinner ; it causes despair as to all human methods of salvation ; it kindles the fire of the wrath of

God in the conscience ; and makes the trembling penitent cry out, in the bitterness of his soul—" Lord, what must I do to be saved ?" It is thus, however, that the Holy Spirit prepares the way for the destruction of a *servile* fear, and for the prevalence of a *filial* and *child-like* fear. Having shaken and overturned all self-righteous confidence, and brought the sinner to feel and acknowledge that he is ruined and undone, and utterly unable to deliver himself, he then unfolds to his view the full and free salvation of the Gospel, shows him that Christ is able to save to the uttermost, points him to the fountain opened for sin, enables him by faith to lay hold upon the righteousness of the blessed Surety, and inspires him with a confidence of pardon and forgiveness, which secures no less the claims of holiness and justice than those of mercy and boundless grace. Then it is that the true fear of the Lord begins. His character as a Lawgiver and Judge is seen combined

with that of a reconciled God and Father ; and the fear of guilt and punishment is exchanged for that filial reverence, gratitude, and love, which makes sin hateful, and imparts to obedience its loftiest pleasure, and its most constraining motive.

You see, then, my dear reader, how true it is, that the fear of the Lord, when properly understood and explained, is the whole of religion ; and, remembering this, you will be enabled to appreciate those numerous passages of Holy Writ which speak of it as such. When it is affirmed that Obadiah feared the Lord from his youth, it is intended to teach us—that, though in the house of idolatrous Ahab, he was a worshipper of the God of Israel ; that he felt himself to be a sinner, and lived in the hope of a Messiah to come ; that he walked with God, by faith, in all the exercises of filial reverence and obedience ; that, in short, he lived above the world, in the humble and confident hope of a brighter and better inheritance. He was

faithful amidst a faithless generation, steadfast to his principles amidst a race of idolaters, and holy and consistent in his walk and conduct, amidst multitudes who blasphemed the name of God, and trampled upon his holy and benevolent laws.

But where the fear of God obtains in early life, it will not fail to display itself by a variety of unequivocal symptoms. It is a powerful influence on the heart, and where it is felt in early life it will mould and regulate the entire character.

SECTION II.

The Evidences of the Early Fear of God.

Amongst these may be enumerated—

1. *A marked dread of sin.* It is sin which breaks down the barriers of conscience, and prepares the thoughtless youth for scenes of future impiety and crime. Joseph was but a youth, when in a moment of great temptation he exclaimed, “How can I do this great

wickedness, and sin against God?"* This was a striking evidence that he feared God, and that that powerful affection inspired him with the dread of sin. It is a truly hopeful symptom of better things, when the youthful conscience is inspired with a kind of instinctive apprehension of the commission of evil. The youth that remembers, when the eye of parents and friends is far removed, that the eye of his God is still upon him, may hope to share in the blessedness of "the pure in heart, who shall see God."†

2. Another evidence of the early fear of God is, *a preference for the society of the good*. While "a companion of fools shall be destroyed," it is equally true, that "he that walketh with the wise shall be wise.‡" "I am a companion," said David, "to all them that fear thee."§ A more hopeless symptom of any young person cannot be discovered than a disposition to mingle in the society

* Gen. xxxix. 9.

† Matt. v. 8.

‡ Prov. xiii. 20.

§ Psa. cxix. 63.

of the frivolous, the dissipated, and the gay. On the other hand, it is truly ominous of good, when young people seek out to themselves a companionship distinguished by its seriousness, its deep thoughtfulness on the subject of religion, its exemption from moral delinquency, its preference for devout conversation, its habits of mental culture, its reverence for Divine truth, for the word and ordinances of God, and its love of sobriety, truth, honour, and benevolence. If there be no preference for the fellowship of the good, there can obviously be no fear of God in the heart.

3. Another evidence of the early fear of God is, *the love of his holy word*. "From a child," Timothy knew and loved "the holy Scriptures." Early attachment to the Bible, as indicated by its frequent and cherished perusal, is a striking and delightful symptom of reverence for the God of the Bible. That child, or that youth, will rise to eminence in the fear of God, who finds a daily pleasure

in the study of the Book of books. "Wherewithal shall a young man learn to cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto, according to thy word."* To my own dear children, and to all the young people who may read this little volume I would say, cultivate an acquaintance with the great and solemn truths of God's word, if you would vanquish the love of sin, and establish the true fear of God in your hearts. Oh it is impossible to calculate the benefits which may spring, in after years, from a minute and early acquaintance with the truth of God.

4. Another evidence of the early fear of God is, *delight in secret prayer*. A praying child!—a praying youth! What a heart-cheering spectacle is this! At the sight of such a spectacle we are reminded of the youth of Samuel who was sanctified from his earliest days. Where there is no prayer, there can be no fear of God. A prayerless youth is evidently "without God and without

* Psa. cxix.

hope in the world." He has no true sense of sin, or he would confess it; no feeling of God's mercy, or he would often and gratefully acknowledge it. My late dear son, James,* who was snatched away in early life, and who was as cheerful and bounding as any who can read this little treatise, was accustomed to spend hours daily in prayer. Does he now regret it in eternity? No; his prayers are changed into praise, and he seems to plead with the young in general, and to say, from his heavenly seat, "If you would hope to follow me to glory, you must now begin the life of prayer."

5. Another symptom of the early fear of God is, *an attachment to the Christian sanctuary*. This symptom, I believe, will never fail. It is a marked accompaniment of early piety. Where the fear of God obtains, his day and his house will be revered; they

* Who died, June 16th, 1836, in his eighteenth year. A memoir of this devoted youth will soon, it is hoped, be given to the public.

will be associated with the purest and noblest pleasures ; they will be anticipated with delight, and entered into with a conscious and holy satisfaction. It is one of the greatest comforts that await the minister of Christ, amidst his toils and his conflicts, to witness the love of God's ordinances as displayed in the character of young converts. While more advanced professors are often found languishing in their attachment to the house and service of God, you hear the young Christian exclaiming

“ I have been there, and still would go,

’Tis like a little heaven below ;”

or, like the sweet singer of Israel, “ I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.”* “ One thing have I desired, and that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.”

* Psa. xxvi. 8.

† Psa. xxvii. 4.

6. A last evidence of the early fear of God which I would mention is, *zeal for the honour of God*. The first love of a young Christian is one of the most animating spectacles that can meet the eye of the devout observer. If his zeal is not always tempered with prudence, who would quench its ardour because it is not yet matured by experience? His fear of God is so deep and abiding, that it almost extinguishes every other fear; and though he, now and then, rushes onward with impetuous feeling, where calmness and reflection might have suggested another course, he is so bent on the grand objects and pursuits of the spiritual life, that he waits not to calculate, but determines to act. Active and unwearied in the path of duty, he is equally active in resisting every solicitation to moral evil; and conscious of his vast and accumulating debt to the sovereign grace of God, he feels that no effort, no sacrifice, can be too great to express his sense of obligation for the vast and inestimable

boon which has been conferred on him. Look at young King Josiah, in the sixteenth year of his reign, commencing a reformation of religion in his kingdom, which, in a few short years, banished idolatry from amongst his subjects, and learn what a blessed thing it is to begin to fear the Lord in the days of your youth.

CHAPTER II.

THE MORE PROMINENT ADVANTAGES CONNECTED WITH THE EARLY FEAR OF GOD.

THIS is a wide and interesting field, and can only be occupied in this little volume to a very limited extent. Whatever advantage may be connected with the fear of the Lord in general, the early predominance of that principle must secure such advantage in the highest possible degree. If at any age it is a blessing to be awakened to the fear of God, it must be the highest of all blessings to be inspired with that fear in the morning of life.

SECTION I.

The Early Fear of God is a preservative against remorse of conscience.

The aged sinner may, indeed, be brought to repentance, he may be snatched from the

jaws of destruction ; but how terrible is the scene which opens to the eye of enlightened conscience, as it surveys the labyrinth of guilt and misery through which, ' in many a long year of rebellion against God, he has been dragged along at Satan's chariot wheels. " I was ashamed," he says, " yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." This deep remorse, as the result of long practised iniquity, is prevented by the early prevalence of religious character, and the early application of the blood of sprinkling to the conscience. The youngest, indeed, are chargeable with guilt, and the tenderest need to have their hearts renewed by the grace of God ; but the materials of remorse, and fear, and despair, must be greatly more pungent in the bosom of the aged penitent, than in that of smiling infancy, and blooming youth. .

Come, then, to the Saviour, ere yet the sad blight of crime has darkened the prospect of life ;—come, ere yet the conscience has been

seared as with a hot iron ;—come, ere yet the depravity of the heart has matured itself in “the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life ;”—come, ere yet you have launched forth into that career of folly, and dissipation, and sin, which may leave a thousand stings behind, long after it has been forsaken and repented of.

SECTION II.

Another advantage of early piety is, the injury it prevents to others.

Every unconverted man not only injures himself, but also his fellow-creatures ; and the longer any one remains in an unconverted state, the more such injury he inflicts. The sport of temptation himself, he is continually tempting others ; going down to the pit with a lie in his right hand, he is, at the same time, dragging others along with him to the gulf below. The thoughtless are the patrons and promoters of thoughtlessness and folly in others ;—the sceptic and infidel are

continually employed in making others sceptics and infidels ;—the licentious young man, by robbing some spotless mind of its innocence, is paving the way for the seduction and ruin of thousands ; in short, every enemy of God, who mingles in society, breathes a moral pestilence in the community, which imparts its dire contagion to multitudes who may seem to be beyond the reach of his influence. What would many a now devoted Christian not give, if he could assure himself, that, in the days of his neglect of God, he had never been the means of injuring a fellow-creature !

There is but one *only* method by which we can make sure that our character and intercourse will not prove injurious to others. That method is open only to one class of my readers, viz., *the young*. Early piety will not only bless yourselves, but it will make you a blessing ; it will not only save you from perdition, but prevent you from becoming the guilty instruments of the perdition of others ;

it will not only make you supremely happy in the love of God, but it will make you the ministers of happiness to others all the days of your pilgrimage on earth.

SECTION III.

A third advantage of early piety is, the maturity of excellence to which it conducts.

The brightest examples of religion our world has ever beheld, have been found in the lives of those who began to fear the Lord by times. The Abels, and Josephs, and Moseses, and Samuels, and Josiahs, and Davids, and Daniels, and Timothys, of inspiration; and the Leightons, and Henrys, and Martyns, and Grahams, of modern times, are encircled by a halo of glory, which becomes the more bright the longer it is contemplated. Nor is there any thing in this circumstance to create surprise; for what is true piety but the "beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord?" Those, then, who stand earliest and longest in this attitude, must assuredly feel most of the transforming power of Divine

grace. Christianity is a school, and those who are longest under its discipline must better understand, and more powerfully feel and exhibit its spirit. Christianity is communion with God, and those who have conversed most with the fountain of eternal light, and love, and purity, must reflect most of the Divine image upon a dark and miserable world. Christianity is union to Christ, and those who have longest stood in this dignified and blessed relation are fitted most to exhibit its happy effects in a holy, devout, and benevolent life. Christianity is the science of heaven, and those who study it longest, and drink most deeply at the fountain of life, will breathe most of that wisdom which cometh from above. In one word, those who fear the Lord from their youth will be sure to fear Him greatly.

SECTION IV.

A fourth advantage of early piety is, the sure preparation which it yields for an early grave.

An early grave is the lot of millions of our

race. Like the fair blossoms of an uncongenial spring, they come forth only to perish. A third part of the young are destined to an early tomb; and what but early piety can meeten them for such a destiny? The expiring child, who has been taught to fear his God, and to lisp the precious name of his Saviour, is in a more enviable position than the most renowned philosopher, in all the height of his discovery, who has not sat down as a little child at the feet of Jesus. Oh the sweet peace, the calm and holy serenity, the bright and joyous hope, which play around the dying pillow of the young Christian, as he combats the last enemy, and prepares for his heavenly flight! We have seen him, in life's bright morn, ere yet the heart was saddened with care, longing to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better; we have seen the glassy eye brightening and sparkling with the hopes of immortality; we have heard the faint but fervent prayer poured from quivering and pallid lips;—"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" Oh how unutter-

ably sublime is the death of a young Christian ! To see him quitting the world without a sigh, at that period of life when most it is fitted to allure ; to hear him counselling his brothers and sisters, with a dying, faltering voice, to seek the Lord while he may be found, to call upon him while he is near ; to behold him, with all the calm resignation and faith of a departing prophet, committing his immortal spirit into the bosom of his Saviour and his God ; to see the smile of peace resting upon his motionless features, even after they have subsided into all the stillness and coldness of death—surely this is the perfection of the moral sublime—a spectacle of moral and spiritual grandeur which nothing but faith in a crucified Redeemer could ever realise.

It may now be proper to follow up these representations of the nature, evidences, and advantages of the early fear of God, by some earnest exhortations to several classes of the young deeply interested in the reception of the precious doctrine stated.

CHAPTER III.

PARTICULAR CLASSES OF THE YOUNG URGED TO AN IMMEDIATE CULTIVATION OF THE FEAR OF GOD.

IF this great and holy principle be the only preservative from evil, the only sure minister of good, both for time and eternity, how important is it that all the young, of every class, should aim at its immediate attainment !

SECTION I.

*An Appeal to that class of Young Persons who
have already begun to fear the Lord.*

To such favoured individuals, I do not need to address the language either of terror or rebuke. I need not to plead with them to fear the Lord by times ; for they have already given themselves to his service. They have experienced the benefits which early

piety conveys, they have felt the blessed hopes it inspires. In the morning of their days they have tasted of the waters of the river of life, and their thirst for vain and unsatisfying pleasures has been extinguished. Still, my first appeal is to them; because I would *congratulate*, and would *caution* them.

1. *I would congratulate them.* What an unspeakable mercy is it that God himself has taught you his own fear; that you have learnt, by Divine grace, that it is the beginning of wisdom; that you full well know that to fear God "is to hate evil." Oh the mercy of having passed through the terrors of an awakened conscience to the cross of Christ! There you have seen the great and avenging God, in the mild and endearing attitude of a reconciled Father, smiling in infinite benignity upon his once lost but now recovered child! Permit me to mingle my tears of joy with yours; the prodigal son "was dead, and is alive again, was lost and

is found." It is meet that we should rejoice and give thanks over the deliverance and redemption of lost souls. Adored be the riches of that grace which plucked you as brands from the burning, which taught your heart and your lips to pray, which "brought you up out of the fearful pit, and out of the miry clay, which set your feet upon a rock, established your goings, and put a new song into your mouth, even salvation unto our God." But while I would congratulate you upon the change wrought, I would equally

2. *Admonish you* as to the course which you are now to pursue. "*Go forward*," then, is the voice of God to you in your new position. Rest not in past experience or attainments. "There is yet very much land to be possessed." The enemies of your salvation are all waiting for your halting. The world is full of temptation, Satan is ever on the alert, your own heart is deceitful and full of unbelief. Go forward, then, "looking

unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith." The only method of escaping spiritual declension is, to aim at daily progress in the Divine life. Seek an *increase* of "the fear of the Lord;" be more in your closets, in the duties of prayer, self-scrutiny, and diligent perusal of the holy Scriptures; watch against the inlets to temptation; cultivate, with never-failing assiduity, the means of grace; "abstain from all appearance of evil; and the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." *

SECTION II.

An Appeal to Young Inquirers.

To such I would say, stifle not that voice within which tells you to fear God from your youth. Quench not the feeble spark of con-

* 1 Thess. v. 22, 23.

viction, but seek to kindle it into a holy flame of devotion. Resist not the strivings of God's Spirit within you, and in the ministry of the word, lest you should tempt him to abandon you to eternal impenitence. Think it not enough that you are almost persuaded to be Christians, since your everlasting ruin will be more awful in this state than if such conviction had never flashed upon your conscience. Delay not your decision for God another year—another month—another week—another day—another hour—another moment; *for* "NOW is the accepted time, NOW is the day of salvation" to your soul. O flee, without a moment's delay, from the wrath to come. Abandon every habit, every companion, every book, every sin, that would hinder your decision for eternity. The door of mercy is still open; but if you still refuse to enter, it may be shut for ever, in the twinkling of an eye, and you may find yourself consigned to the fellowship of the lost. Fall down upon

the knees of penitence, and cry for mercy. "The Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."* O forget not that many who once inquired, but never came to a decision, are now mingling with the spirits of the lost.

SECTION III.

An Appeal to the utterly Careless and Impenitent.

How mournful that such a class should be found to exist! Would that we had to seek for them in vain! What a sad spectacle is a young man or a young woman abandoned to thoughtlessness, folly, and impiety! Over such deluded victims of sin and Satan we could weep tears of blood. But rivers of such tears could not save them. O you must weep for yourselves, or you will howl for ever in the gulf of endless despair.

* Rev. xxii. 17.

You are now wretched outcasts from God ; but there are a thousand alleviations to the cruel bondage of sin by which you are enthralled—a few more plunges, however, into the mire of iniquity—a few more daring insults to a holy God—and you will then be shut up for ever in the prison of hell, with those blasphemers, drunkards, Sabbath-breakers, profane swearers, and impure persons, with whom you sought fellowship in the present life. But then all the alleviations of sin will have passed away, its deceit, its blandishment, its false colours, will all have vanished ; and you will then learn, though too late, amidst the dread realities of eternity, that “ it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against God.” While I am now pleading with you on these awful subjects, some guilty spirits have been ranked with the lost. The drunkard’s doom has been sealed, the fornicator’s doom has been sealed, the Sabbath-breaker’s doom has been sealed, the man of pleasure’s doom has been sealed.

Hark ! what is that voice which issues from the gulf below ? “ Send—send to our unhappy companions whom we have left behind us, warn them of their danger, call on them to repent, lest they come into this place, for we are grievously tormented in this flame !” Ah, my fellow-sinner, “ if you believe not Moses and the prophets,” if you hear not the voice of God pleading with you in the Gospel, “ so neither would you be persuaded if one rose from the dead.” Abandon sin, flee to Christ, implore mercy, or you are lost for ever.

SECTION IV.

An Appeal to Sunday-school Children.

Dear children, let me plead with you to improve with diligence your present inestimable privileges. God will hereafter call you to a solemn account for the use you have made of them. You will be ranked among the guiltiest of all children, if you fail to bring forth fruit correspondent to the

culture bestowed upon you. Remember what God says unto you, "Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord." As you would not perish in hell fire, O flee from sin, and sinful companions. Let not the anxious labour of your pious teachers be lost upon you. It will be a terrifying sight to see any of the children of our Sunday-schools mingling at last with devils and lost spirits in hell. Better had it been for you that you had never been born. You have been warned and instructed, and great will be your guilt, if after all you perish in your sin. Think of your companions that have lately died, and ask yourselves, individually, "If I had died, where should I have been this night? should I have been with the spirits of the blessed in heaven, or with the spirits of the lost in perdition?" Think of those dear teachers who have been suddenly or unexpectedly taken from you, and ask yourselves, individually, "Shall I meet them at

the right hand of Christ, or will they be compelled to hear the sentence pronounced upon me, 'Depart from me, I never knew you, ye workers of iniquity?'"

O, children! prepare to meet your God. Pray to be filled with the dread of sin. Hasten to the feet of Jesus. Listen to the voice of your teachers. Call upon the name of your God. Treasure up his most holy word in your memory and hearts. Shun the company of the wicked. Remember, that "all liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Love and obey your parents. Diligently attend to the instructions so anxiously ministered unto you. Strive to be a comfort to your parents, your teachers, and all your friends: thus will you have reason, in time and in eternity, to bless God for the benefits received in the Sunday-school.

SECTION V.

An Appeal to Sunday-school Teachers.

Let me assure you, my dear young friends, of the sincere affection I bear to you, and of the deep and growing interest I take in your blessed and honourable work. Think always, I beseech you, of your office, as one of immense responsibility. Forget not that the dear children committed to your care are forming their ideas of Christianity itself from your instructions and deportment. O live very near to God. Cultivate, with assiduity, all the graces of Christian character. Be much in prayer for a blessing on your work. Let deep seriousness, combined with cheerful piety, mark your entire behaviour. Remember that children are keen observers of human actions; and that one instance of forgetfulness may impede your usefulness for a lengthened period of public labour.

Let me entreat you to covet earnestly the

best gifts for Sunday-school service. Be not contented that you are as diligent and useful as others around you, but strive to improve the talents which God has given you to the utmost extent. And in connexion with this, cultivate a meek, humble, and loving spirit. Let *punctuality* be the uniform rule of your conduct, that your superintendent, your fellow-teachers, and the children of your class, may be able fully to calculate on your course of action.

Fortify yourselves against discouragement, by the influence of *solid principle*. Do not depend on mere excitements, which may be of rare occurrence.

What you undertake make conscience of performing ; and comfort yourselves in the hope that your labour will not be in vain in the Lord.

O think of the unutterable value attaching to the soul of every little child under your care, and aim to leave a testimony in the conscience of all who listen to your

periodical instructions. If you can bring yourselves in contact with the parents of your little charge, your usefulness will be greatly increased. In this way, you may both save the souls of parent and child. Go on, with energy and ardour, in your work, and the God of peace be with you.

SECTION VI.

An Appeal to the Children of Godly Parents.

As the children of God's covenant, I cannot but look on *you* with peculiar interest. You have been dedicated to God by solemn prayer, and, most of you, by baptismal rites. You are the children of promise. Your parents have often pleaded that gracious assurance, "I will pour out my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." And shall they plead in vain? Remember, it is of such as you that Jehovah speaks, in connexion with his promise; "One shall say, I am the Lord's; and

another shall call himself by the name of Jacob, and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel." * Some of you have already been gathered into the Church ; you have confessed the God of your fathers ; you have taken hold of God's covenant. We bless and adore that Saviour who has looked upon you with tender pity, and touched your hearts by his sovereign grace.

But, oh, are there not some of you yet grieving the hearts of your parents ? and, what is still more lamentable, grieving God's Holy Spirit ? What a hinderance to religion in the world are the ungodly children of pious parents ! O think of your responsibility, think of the fearful doom which awaits you, if you go on in your frowardness. Let me plead with you earnestly in the name of Christ. Does not your own conscience tell you that you cannot be happy while you continue to resist the light ? Is

* Isaiah xlv. 5.

it nothing to you that your dear parents are wrestling in prayer, from day to day, for your conversion? Is it nothing that they pass many a sleepless night, while they think of your carelessness and neglect of your eternal interests? Can you hope to prosper, while you carry about with you the burden of an accusing conscience? Reason might tell you that you cannot. And even if you should prosper in such a state, what does God say of it? Does he not say, that the prosperity of fools shall be their destruction?

Let me solemnly warn you against the insidious progress of impenitence. Remember, my dear young friends, that it steals over the heart by an imperceptible but mischievous process. You will not become a profligate *at once*, but what will this avail, if you settle down into a profligate *at last*? I beseech you to remember, that the grey hairs of many a devout parent have been brought down with sorrow to the grave, by means of the depravity of wicked and profligate

would enforce, with amazing energy, on the conscience and the heart, that precept of inspiration,—“Flee also youthful lusts.”*

Forget not that you have much to fear *from yourselves*. The seeds of all evil are in the heart; and they require not a vigorous cultivation to make them grow. Of themselves they will spring up, in baneful luxuriance, unless much pains be taken to check their vegetation, and to eradicate them from the soil. O study habits of self-scrutiny and self-government. Aim to acquire a just sense of self-respect; and remember, that nothing can truly degrade you but sin. Repress, with a manly courage, the pitiful qualities of pride, and vanity, and empty show; for rest assured, if they are not crushed in the bud, they will lead on to unbridled self-will and extravagance, and ultimately, perhaps, to some act of dishonesty that may tarnish your character for life.

But you have much, also, to apprehend

* 2 Tim. ii. 22.

from others. You must, of necessity, mingle in society with others of your own age and station. Be very careful of much intimacy with any young man, till you have ascertained that his moral and religious principles are sound. Habits of frequent intercourse with a tainted mind, will gradually and imperceptibly lower the standard of right thinking and feeling upon all subjects connected with religion and morality. More than half the vices of young men are the result of unguarded companionship with those fashionable adepts in crime, who insinuate immorality by looks and sneers, and who undermine the principles of their unwary friends, while they affect to minister to their instruction, or to contribute to their gratification. As a well selected friend, about your own age, who sympathises in your pursuits, may be a great blessing to you; so, on the other hand, a rashly formed friendship may be the curse of your whole future life. Let me earnestly warn you against

four of the prevailing besetments of young men.

1. *Extravagance*.—This easily contracted habit has been the absolute ruin of thousands. It begins generally with the love of expensive attire, and proceeds from one step to another, till prudence, integrity, and even decency itself, completely disappear. The name of this vice is legion; for it attracts to itself all that is base and degrading in human character. Estimate your means of lawful expenditure, and make it your aim to keep within rather than to exceed due bounds. Economy learnt in early life will preserve you from innumerable mortifications, and will prepare you for all those events of Providence, whether prosperous or adverse, which may await you in your passage through this checkered world. I would also guard you against

2. *Intemperance*.—This sin is so prevalent among young men, that it is the more necessary to speak of it with uncompromising

fidelity. It obtains frequently where the grosser acts of inebriety are scarcely ever to be discerned. A free indulgence in the use of wines and ardent spirits is an inlet to innumerable deviations from the path of integrity. It vitiates the humours of the body, depresses or unnaturally elevates the animal spirits, unduly excites the functions of the brain, unfits for sober reflection, and powerfully impels to the commission of acts of impurity. Could every young man who reads this be induced never again to resort to unnatural stimulants, except for medicinal purposes, I am satisfied of this, that health, mental peace, studious habits, and self-government, would be among the early results. I would also guard you against

3. *Impurity*.—Once entangled in this evil, and oh how next to hopeless is the labour of extrication! Study *purity of heart*. Think of the dreadful consequences to yourselves and others, of a life of impure indulgence. Shudder at the first deviation

from the paths of virtue ; and if, unhappily, you have been ensnared, call in the fear of God, to your aid, and determine, in the strength of promised grace, to keep your bodies henceforward as "temples of the Holy Ghost." Seek to be impressed with the hatefulnes of the sin of impurity itself; think how it degrades an immortal being, how it associates you with the vilest and most guilty of our race, how it vitiates and pollutes the affections of the mind, how it entangles others with yourself in the same net of guilt, how it ministers to bitter reflections in after life, and even at death itself, and how it prepares for total and eternal separation from a God of infinite and spotless purity. By the loathsomeness of the crime itself, by the millions of wretched victims with which it has overspread our world, by the unutterable miseries which it has poured into the bosoms of families, by the influence which it exerts in corrupting the public morals, by the hinderance which

it presents to the progress of Divine truth in our world, by the dire calamity which it inflicts on her who was ordained to be the guardian of man's virtue, by the power of an accusing conscience, by the sufferings and death of a bleeding Saviour, and by the terrors of everlasting death, I beseech you to "possess your vessel in sanctification and honour." I would also guard you against

4. *The sin of trifling with the gentler sex.*
The turpitude of this vice, for such it must be called, is only equalled by its unspeakable meanness. Rarely, indeed, does it fail to carry along with it its punishment even in the present life. He who has trifled with woman's dearest possession—the confidence of an unsuspecting heart—may yet live to find that a retributive Providence can pour into the cup of life some bitter ingredient, that may prove the standing memorial of his more than wanton cruelty.

Let professing young men, in particular, be careful on this head. Their religious cha-

racter may tend to inspire confidence in their honour and integrity; but if they, too, should prove faithless as others, who make no pretension to the fear of God, what a stumbling-block will they cast in the way of those who may be beginning to "inquire the way to Zion with their faces thitherward!" It is a dastardly piece of nameless barbarity, to lead on an unsuspecting mind to the indulgence of hopes afterwards to be extinguished, for no better reason than the fickleness of an unstable and unprincipled mind. Unless young men are careful on this head, I should despair of their ever attaining to distinction in any quality of mind, either good or great. Observation and the study of human nature lead me to the conclusion, that he who can easily trifle with the affections of a delicate and virtuous young woman, is not, in general, entitled to confidence or respect in any of the relations of life.

Having offered these remarks to young

men, in the way of caution, I would now entreat them to fortify themselves against evil, by the study and adoption of right principles and habits. I beseech them to aim at the intellectual, moral, and, above all, religious culture of their minds. Let them aim to acquire a taste for reading, for reflection, and for composition upon the several subjects which engage their thoughts. In this way the intellectual will triumph over the sensual, and the spiritual over that which is gross ; while daily augmenting resources will stimulate them in the honourable career of improvement.

Forget not that your characters are now forming, not only for time, but also for eternity. What your youth *is*, intellectually, morally, religiously, that also, in all probability, will your manhood, your old age, and your eternity hereafter, *be*. Fear God, call upon his name, study his word, venerate his day and his house, seek the fellowship of those who serve him, and all will

be well for both worlds. I give you these counsels, in the spirit of sincere regard for your best interests, and I pray God, that he would pour out upon you the grace of his Holy Spirit, that you may not be tempted to make light of instructions, which, if properly laid to heart, may lead to the happiest results, both in time and in a never-ending eternity.

SECTION VIII.

An Appeal to Young Women.

This may seem to some a more delicate and difficult task. I confess I do not feel it to be such. From the degree in which woman is sheltered from temptation, and from the peculiar accessibleness of her nature to all moral and religious considerations, I regard the duty of addressing young women, on spiritual concerns, as one of the most hopeful that comes within the range of ministerial occupation. If ever piety is lovely, and it is always lovely, it must surely be such when it is seen blending with the soft-

ness and delicacy of a nature marked out by God for offices of gentleness, kindness, and fidelity. As the religion of heaven has done so much to improve and elevate the social condition of woman, surely *she* will prove herself pre-eminently ungrateful, and unspeakably guilty, if she fail to receive its lessons, to imbibe its spirit, and to rule herself by its gentle and holy precepts.

The fairest attractions, the highest accomplishments, the kindest dispositions, in woman, without the endowment of a gracious principle, leave her destitute of more than half her proper ornament. Without a spirit of sincere piety, and fervent consecration to the glory of God ; without a simple and confiding faith in the Friend of sinners ; without the delicate softening of Christian graces and tempers, what is woman often but the sport of her own vanity, or the victim of man's selfish, and often cruel dominion ? Invest her with Christian hopes, raise her to fellowship with her Saviour and her God,

breathe into her heart the spirit of prayer, throw around her the sanctity and the security of religious principle, and you place her in a position to overcome the weakness of her own nature, and to become man's guide, rather than the subject of his despotic rule.

If we thought aright on this subject, we should look upon a woman without godliness with sentiments of dissatisfaction, bordering on disgust. The most lovely objects exhibit the greatest deformity when divested of that particular quality which constitutes their prime beauty and excellence. Piety in woman is her brightest jewel, her noblest distinction in the eye of God; and when she is seen without it, she is but a fair tempter, the more dangerous because nature has fitted her to attract.

But if she is ever to be invested with the diadem of grace, let her put it on in the bright morning of life; when, set amidst youthful charms, it will shed sweet lustre

over her whole character, and make her an angel of mercy in the circle where she is destined to move.

Let me not forget to remind woman, that, amidst all the softness which belongs to her physical and mental constitution, she is as much by nature "enmity against God" as are those of another sex. Let her not mistake the sheltering hand of Providence, which has hid her from the fierce blast of temptation, for the work of saving grace on the heart. She may be amiable, and yet not pious; she may be free from all moral stain, and yet not a partaker of God's grace; she may be full of sentimental musings on the subject of religion, and yet a stranger to that new and spiritual birth, without which Christ tells her she can neither see nor enter into the kingdom of God.

1. As an aid to early piety, I would beseech young women to guard against the indulgence of vanity as it respects *mere personal attractions*. What are they all, at best, but

fading distinctions ; and when they are dissociated from the lovelier qualities of mind, and more especially from the fear of God, they are objects rather of painful than of pleasurable contemplation. " Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain ; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."* The fairest face must soon fade and die ; but a lovely disposition, softened, refined, and elevated by the power of sovereign grace, is a plant of heaven, destined to bloom for ever in the Paradise of God.

2. As a further aid to early piety, I would beseech young women to strengthen their minds against the folly of laying too much stress on *mere exterior accomplishments*. Many parents are sadly to blame here. They educate their daughters as if God had never intended them for the active duties of life ; or as if music and painting were to make up the whole range of their future pursuits. These accomplishments are all well in their

* Prov. xxxi. 30.

proper place ; but if they are substituted for more solid mental culture, or if they usurp the place of religious training and discipline, what a sad blank will they create in the history of a lovely and interesting young creature destined for eternity ! What will it be to speak with fluency all the modern languages of Europe, if you have not been taught the language of Canaan ? What will it be to be mistress of the sweetest sounds, and to know all the harmonies and melodies that thrill the ear, and soothe the heart, if the music that was sung by shepherds on the plains of Bethlehem, has no charms for your untutored and unregenerated mind ? What will it be to feast the eye on all that is lovely in nature, and to be able, by faithful pencillings, to embody whatever is grand and beautiful in the varied landscape, if, after all, you have no eye and no heart for moral scenery, and can gaze on all the wonders of Gethsemane and Calvary, without a single emotion corresponding with the sublime and all-subduing

spectacle. What will you be able to say in reply to Jesus Christ in the great day, when he charges you with having bestowed more pains, in a single year, upon a few frivolous accomplishments, than ever you devoted, in your whole life, to the great business of preparation for eternity?

Far would I be from undervaluing female accomplishments; but I would warn all within my reach, from losing their precious souls for their sake. The grandest of all mental accomplishment, is the equipment of the soul for eternity and heaven; and if this equipment is neglected, the very pains we have taken to rear a fading monument to the praise of our own genius will but enhance the guilt of so fatal a neglect.

3. As a further aid to early piety, I would beseech young women to guard against *the fascinations of dress, and undue ornament of their persons*. "Whose adorning," said the Apostle Peter, "let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing

gold, or of putting on of apparel ; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is, in the sight God, of great price."* There is a modest and becoming attention to personal appearance in woman, which it is painful to see neglected ; but when a love of show and dazzling ornament betrays itself, it is but the too frequent indication of a proportionate neglect of the proper culture of the immortal mind, in the graces of humility, self-examination, and prayer. Whatever ministers to pride, vanity, and thoughtlessness, must distance the mind from religious influence, and must tend to keep up the native carelessness and indifference of the human heart, to the great interests of the invisible and eternal world.

But it is not enough that you guard against those evils which stand in the way of your becoming devout and serious ; you

* 1 Pet. iii. 3, 4.

must actually enter on the religious life, by examining the Bible for yourselves, by deciding that you will be Christians, by forsaking every known habit of evil, by making conscience of secret prayer, by devoting yourselves to the service of the blessed Saviour. Let me affectionately entreat you to set apart a portion of every day for earnest inquiry into the state of your heart. At those seasons of solemn adjudication, ask yourselves the following questions :—" Am I, or am I not, a child of God ? If I am, what are the evidences of my being such ? Do I hate sin ? Do I love holiness ? Have I any delight in prayer ? Is the word of God sweet unto my taste ? Do I love the children of God ? Am I different from what I once was ?" Such questions as these will not only aid you in determining your real state ; but they will stimulate you in your resolution to throw off the yoke of worldly conformity, and to " put on the Lord Jesus." Remember, you cannot serve God and Mammon.

You must "come out from the world and be separate," if you would realise that most gracious promise, "I will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."*

SECTION IX.

An Appeal to Professional Young Men, especially Medical Students.

I am fully sensible that yours is a situation of considerable exposure. You are in danger from pride of intellect, from infidel opinions, from corrupting associations, from such occupancy of your time in secular studies, as leaves but a fraction of existence for religious meditation and prayer, and for the diligent perusal of God's holy word. The medical profession, in particular, is encumbered with these difficulties. It is, from its earliest stages, a profession of incessant application; many medical writers of considerable celebrity have advocated the doctrines of mate-

* 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

rialism ; and many engaged in medical studies have already proceeded far in sceptical notions. Hence the dangers which await an unsuspecting youth in repairing to the metropolis, for the purpose of attending lectures, and observing hospital practice. Removed from the eye of his parents, he is ushered into the society of a body of young men as thoughtless and inexperienced as himself ; he glories, perhaps, in his newly acquired freedom ; he hears many an insinuation against revealed religion ; his ears are assailed by many an impure sentiment ; the pride of discovery makes him set light by old fashioned notions of piety ; the lecturer, perhaps, does not always adopt the course most fitted to fortify the mind of his pupil against the approaching danger ; and in a few short months what little principle existed is overcome, or, at least, put under arrest ; and a hopeful youth is converted into a superficial materialist, or an incipient libertine.

This, I much fear, is the case with multitudes attached to this most useful and honourable profession; not, indeed, by reason of any necessary tendency in medical studies to infidelity or libertinism, but from the circumstances which are too often connected with a medical education, and from the innate depravity of the human heart.

To those who are exposed to these formidable evils, I would earnestly recommend the utmost caution in the selection of their medical young friends; let moral character, or at least exemption from prevailing vice, be regarded as indispensable; and let any avowal of hostility to the Bible deter from voluntary association with them; unless, indeed, there should be reason to hope that kind and enlightened conversation would be likely to overcome the unhappy bias.

Let the medical student also fortify himself in the well-sustained belief—for he may do so if he will—that none of the legitimate lessons of anatomy, surgery, materia

medica, and physiology, inculcate either the doctrines of materialism or infidelity. Some of the greatest experimenters in medical science have been devout believers in the data of revelation, and nothing but crude speculations, which have been answered a thousand times, have been advanced on the adverse side of this great and momentous question.

I would further recommend, that if real doubts have arisen in the mind as to the truth of any particular part of revealed religion, (for this is the least compliment to which the Bible is entitled,) an instant and laborious attention be given to the evidences which attest the Divine origin of the Scriptures. The more thoroughly this investigation is gone into the more certain will be the favourable result. Christianity has never had any thing to fear from the fair inductions of medical or other science. If crudity and conjecture were argument, then she might have reason to fear; but I am

not aware that a single fact in physiology, fairly stated, tends in the least degree to materialism, or indeed to any one of all the conclusions of sceptics.

Above all, my dear young friends, I would entreat you to watch over the state of the mind, and to see to it that the feelings of a rising scepticism are not the result of the insidious growth of sin in the heart. Instead of seeking an excuse for crime in the doctrines of infidelity, seek rather to overcome those 'sinful propensities which, whenever vanquished, will leave the mind in a state of happy freedom to pursue, unfettered, an inquiry after truth.

One grand reason, I conceive, why so many medical men have been averse to the doctrines of revealed religion, has been their sad neglect of religious ordinances. If the Sabbath and its institutions are habitually trampled upon, what can be the result, but a marked impiety or a gloomy scepticism? I have no dread of science and

philosophy ; but if they are to be substituted for the Bible, the mind will remain ignorant of God's truth, and science is not that sacred light which is to guide an immortal being to the regions of eternal life.

To no profession in the world is solid, enlightened piety of more importance than to medical men. Their walk is necessarily confined to the sick and the dying. If they look on man as a mere animal, or if they have no impressive view of his immortal destiny, they must be essentially disqualified for the discharge of some of the most solemn and delicate duties belonging to their calling. How good is it for the medical practitioner to be enabled to speak a word in season to the expiring saint, or to the dying sinner ! to be fitted to minister to the mind of his patient, while he is doing all that proper skill can dictate for the diseased and suffering body. Let *my* last hours be soothed by one who believes in the immortality of my

spirit, and who knows how to raise my sinking hopes to joys that shall never fade !

SECTION X.

An Appeal to Apprentices.

With certain defined privileges, you are called to occupy the position of servants ; and upon the character you now sustain and display, your prospects in future life must mainly depend. To know how properly to submit to legitimate authority and rule is indispensable to your being ultimately fitted to preside over any establishment of your own. A refractory apprentice will be sure, in his turn, to be a tyrannical master. He who would learn to rule must first study to obey. Trust-worthiness, diligence, and unexceptionable good behaviour, are the qualities you must seek to possess ; and there is but one sure method of attaining to them, viz., "the fear of the Lord." This will enable you to act *on principle*, and will be

equally influential, when no eye is upon you, as when you are in the immediate presence of your master. Study to be uniformly correct in fulfilling the smallest trusts; let truth and integrity preserve you; and be it your constant study so to act that when you leave your master's house it may be to the sincere regret of all who know you.

SECTION XI.

An Appeal to Young Mechanics

In a country like ours, and indeed in most countries, mechanics are a numerous and most important class of the community. We are all, more or less, dependent on them for the comforts and necessities of life. We owe them a debt of gratitude. Christian ministers, and Christian churches, in particular, should be greatly concerned for their welfare; especially for the welfare of their immortal souls. It is this conviction, I trust, which prompts me to address a few

words of counsel and warning to you. You will, I trust, take it as from a sincere friend:

Your temptations and exposures are very great. It is the knowledge of this alone that can preserve you from innumerable evils. You have every thing to fear from *infidelity*, *intemperate* habits, and *vicious associates*.

1. I am told, on good authority, that in all directions efforts are being made to sap the religious belief of the labouring and industrious classes of the community. If such efforts are made with any of you, just ask yourselves, "What are the *motives*, and what the *characters* of those who would take from us the hopes of Christianity? *Can* their *motives* be good? *are* their *characters*, in general, such as to entitle them to consideration? What do they profess to give us instead of our Bible? And suppose that all men were to become their disciples, would the happiness or the moral purity of the world be increased?"

2. Suffer me, too, to warn you against the soul-destroying habit of *intemperance*, so lamentably prevalent in our country. You know it wastes your substance, destroys the peace of your families, undermines the health and vigour of your bodies, exposes you to other sins, lowers your reputation with all the wise and the good, indisposes you to serious reflection, and prepares you for an unhappy end. Half measures will never enable you to overcome this dreadful evil. You must combat it with a giant strength. Determine never again to frequent the public-house. Join yourselves to the Temperance Society, or be sure to practise its rules. If you do not *abstain*, you will not be able to *conquer*. Put up an earnest prayer to God for aid against this pernicious sin ; and rest assured He will hear and answer your request.

3. And, if *evil associates* have corrupted you, flee from their contaminating atmosphere. This will, indeed, require great

moral courage ; but it is a necessary step, in order to the salvation of your souls. If "one sinner destroyeth much people," how infinitely hazardous must it be, to your eternal interests, to be in habitual intercourse with those who blaspheme God's name, profane his day, live in the habitual practice of vice, and who delight in making others as depraved and guilty as themselves !

SECTION XII.

An Appeal to Young Domestic Servants.

Of all the classes addressed in this little volume, there is none more deserving of a distinct notice than young domestic servants. They are entering upon the duties of a station in life which pre-eminently require the aid and influence of good principles. They are about to become blessings or curses in the families where Divine Providence may cast their lot. A good domestic servant is one of the most precious gifts that can be conferred on any house ; while

one of an opposite character is something of the nature of a real calamity.

It is the *young servant*, in particular, to whom I would address myself; because, in *her* case, there is great hope of being enabled to aid her *in the formation of right habits*. The importance of this will instantly be seen, if we call to remembrance how difficult a thing it is to eradicate and overcome any evil habit once acquired. Some courses of action have become so inveterate, by long practice, that but little hope remains of their ever being vanquished. With God, indeed, all things are possible; and there is nothing too hard for his grace to effect; but, looking at the ordinary course of events, we are not to expect that settled habits of wrong action will ever yield to the influence of better principles. I have seen such habits greatly meliorated by the powerful energy of religious sentiment; but it too generally happens that a line of conduct long persisted in, goes down with an individual to the grave.

Hence the vast importance of the young servant guarding against the acquirement of any habit which may militate against her respectability, her usefulness, and her comfort. To those who are anxious to become *really good servants*, I would tender the following advice.

1. *Begin your servitude with an acknowledgment of God.* It is his blessing alone that can make you happy, and that can truly prosper the work of your hands. The humble, but useful, station you are called to occupy, is the result of his providential arrangement. He it is who has ordained that some are to command, and others to obey : that one is to be in the condition of a master, and another in that of a servant. This is no hardship, but a blessing. It is thus that society is linked together by a variety of bonds, and that each separate relation contributes to the good of the whole. Under this appointment of Heaven, the servant may be as happy as the master ; and he who

obeys as truly respectable as he who^o is destined to command. Let the young servant familiarise her mind with this view of God's providence, and go to her place with a full conviction that if she seek to honour God in it, he will not fail to give her his blessing.

2. *Be sure you take your Bible with you to your place, and that you read a portion of it daily.* In this divinely inspired volume, you will be able to trace minutely all the duties which belong to your station in life, and will read of many happy instances in which faithful servants have been rewarded, even in this life, for their dutiful conduct to those under whom they were placed; as for example, the Centurion's servant, who "was dear unto him," for his good conduct, and who was raised up from sickness, by Christ, in answer to his master's prayer.* And also the servant of Abraham, whose prayer God signally regarded, in testimony to his fidelity to

* Luke vii. 2—10.

"the father of the faithful."* I would have you read the Bible *first* and *chiefly*, that you may become acquainted with your lost state as a sinner, and with the grace and love of Him who came into the world to die for you. But *next* to this, I would entreat you to read it, with a view to find out what God has said to servants, and what instances there are on the record of inspired truth, of servants worthy of becoming your model. Read, at least *once every week*, the following portions of Scripture, and entreat God, by his grace, to incline your hearts to receive and regard the lessons they contain. Eph. vi. 5—8. Col. iii. 22—24. Tit. ii. 9; 10. 1 Pet. ii. 18—24. Consulting these injunctions of Holy Writ, you will learn,

3. *To maintain a strict and watchful integrity.* Without a *scrupulous* honesty, no other quality will be available in the character of a servant. Suspicion, on this head,

* Gen. xxiv.

will prove fatal to your respectability. Whatever kind of property is confided to your care, you are to be as anxious for its safe keeping as if it were your own. Never dream of your having the right to dispose of a single farthing's worth of it, without the direction or consent of your mistress. Avoid all petty peculations, just as much as you would any formidable theft. The principle is the same in both cases; and that servant who would pilfer a single penny is as dishonest at heart as she who would open her mistress's drawers and steal her jewels or her apparel. Be *careful*, too, of the property committed to you, as well as avoid every act of direct dishonesty. The unnecessary consumption, by carelessness, of articles of food, or fuel, or household furniture, is a species of dishonesty of which some servants, otherwise upright, are sadly guilty. A daily habit of wasting may bring ruin imperceptibly upon some families whose means are but slender. Ever remember that the eye

of God is upon you, and that the slightest deviation from the strict path of integrity exposes you to his displeasure, lays a burden upon conscience, and paves the way for the loss of character. Let it be your ambition to acquire a just reputation for honesty, that the feeling of all who know you may be, that "*untold gold may be committed to your care.*"

4. *Be careful to cultivate becoming dispositions.* Under this head, many considerations will suggest themselves. *Good temper* is indispensable to the comfort of your master and mistress, and to the happiness of your fellow-servants. If you feel that you are naturally irritable, and soon or easily provoked to anger, put yourself under the restraint of calm reflection, and sound principle. It is an intolerable nuisance in a house, when a servant is habitually, or even frequently, out of temper; and such a servant will not be long borne with, where peace and order are regarded. Self-government, in this matter, will speedily effect great things

for you ; and the habit of restraining an irascible disposition will ultimately secure you the victory. Akin to ill-temper, and not less inconvenient and disagreeable, is *a sulky and morose disposition*. To see the countenance of a servant fallen and gloomy, when no earthly cause can be assigned, is truly afflictive to those who are around her. Of the two evils, perhaps, it is worse than *passion* itself. Cheerful, *heartly* service, is a constant feast to the mind of a generous mistress, who will always know how to make allowance for the effect of mere bodily indisposition, or that depression of animal spirits to which all are more or less subject. A *kindly and accommodating* temper, too, is most valuable in the character of a servant. This habit of mind will not only prevent the creation of needless difficulties, but it will enable a servant to surmount many of the daily perplexities and trials arising in domestic life. It will teach her to identify her interests with those of her employers, and will thereby

create feelings towards her akin to those which are cherished to a dutiful and affectionate child.

5. *Avoid extravagance in dress.* This is the fatal rock on which the character of many an otherwise promising servant has been wrecked. Just bear this in mind, that those who would be gratified by seeing the finery of a servant are those only who would readily plot her ruin. All the truly respectable, who wish you well, will be disgusted if they see you dressing in a manner unbecoming your station in life. To be neat and cleanly in your person is not only desirable, but a duty. But it often happens, that the servant most addicted to finery is the one least orderly in her kitchen, and least uniformly neat in her person. In the present day, there is a lamentable tendency in servants to dress above their station : and if you would really acquire the character of a respectable servant, you must set your face against the prevailing evil. Do not let it be said that

your mistress dresses plain, that she may not be mistaken for the servant. Call in good sense, and right principle to your aid, and recollect that no wise or virtuous mind will think the better of you because you put on an appearance unsuitable to the sphere in which God has called you to move.

6. *Be careful not to exonerate yourself from the duties of your station, because there may be a lack of right conduct on the part of those whom you are called to serve.* You have to see only to yourself, that all is right in your own temper and deportment. You will have only to give an account for your own actions at last. You owe an upright discharge of duty, "not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." If your station is imbittered by the wrong conduct of others, you have a right, by proper means, to seek a change of residence; but so long as you remain with any family, you are to give them your honest and devoted services, leaving all the difficulties of your

station to the overruling hand of that Providence which will never be wanting in its means of support and comfort to those who truly seek to honour God.

7. *Finally, let religious servants, in particular, see to it that they adorn their Christian profession, by a becoming demeanour in the station in which God has placed them.* It is much to be lamented, that just cause of complaint often exists in the conduct of professing servants. They must not presume upon their Christian relations, even in families where the name of God is feared, much less in those families where piety exerts no visible control. It is a sad thing to hear any one say, "I would rather have any one in my house than a professing servant." Such complaints are no doubt often made on slight grounds, and with undue forgetfulness of the infirmities which attach to human nature in its best condition; but I dare not doubt, from what I have seen in life, that some professedly religious servants, from an

over-familiar and gossiping habit of mind, and from a neglect of the appropriate duties of their calling, have given just cause for sorrowful regret, on the part of those who wished them well, and who would not have expected more even of a religious servant than it was her duty to yield.

I must, at the same time, express it as my firm belief, that if some professing servants have disappointed the reasonable expectations of those who have hoped better things of them, others, again, have nobly sustained their religious consistency; and by so doing have been the means, under God, of recommending piety to the favourable reception of families, where previously it had exerted no powerful or manifest control. In one word, some of the greatest evils, and some of the greatest blessings, have come to families through the medium of servants.

